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U.S. Department of the Interior

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Mammoth Cave National Park News Release

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Mammoth Cave NP seeks public comment on proposed fee increases

MAMMOTH CAVE, Ky., November 14, 2014 – Mammoth Cave National Park Superintendent Sarah Craighead announced today that the Park is seeking public comment on a proposed increase in user fees, which would take effect in 2015. Public comment will be accepted from November 14 to December 5, 2014.

“We would like to hear what our visitors and neighbors think about the proposal to increase the user fees in the park,” said Craighead. “Some of these have not changed in seven or more years, while the cost of doing business has gone up every year.”

Written comments may be submitted through the National Park Service planning website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/MACA>.

The authority to charge recreational fees at national parks stems from the 2004 Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.

“We anticipate this increase in park fees will provide an additional \$350,000 per year for use in projects that benefit our visitors,” added Craighead. “We plan to use the new funds for renovations at the Mammoth Cave Hotel.”

Cave tours would increase by \$1 to \$2, except the Wild Cave tour, which would increase by \$5, and camping fees would increase by \$3 to \$5. Fees for reservable picnic shelters would increase by \$25.

Park staff are required to compare the cost of Mammoth Cave fees with the cost of comparable services in the local area: the proposed cave tour fees are 25-30 percent lower than comparable cave tours; the proposed campsite fees are 40 percent lower than comparable campsites; and proposed picnic shelter fees are 35 percent lower than comparable shelters.

At Mammoth Cave, 80 percent of the money collected is used in the park to provide facilities and services that have direct benefit to park visitors. The remaining 20 percent helps support projects in the 270 national park units that do not charge entrance fees, like nearby Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHP in Hodgenville, Ky.

“The recreation fee program is a great asset to Mammoth Cave,” added Craighead. “Part of the new visitor center was funded with fee dollars, but we have also used it to repair trails, roads and campsites, and cover the cost of summer tour guides and environmental education with local schools. Big Hollow Trail is a product of the fee program.”

In 2014, fees were increased for eight cave tours that use outlying cave entrances to cover an increase bus transportation costs. A chart at the conclusion of this release lists each proposed increase by name of visitor service, the present fee, the proposed fee, and the last time a fee increase occurred.

Proposed fee increases at Mammoth Cave National Park:

Visitor service (tour, campsite, shelter)	present fee (\$)	proposed fee (\$)	year of last increase
Mammoth Passage Tour (Adult)	5	7	2001
Mammoth Passage Tour (Youth 6-12)	3.5	5	2001
Frozen Niagara Tour (Adult)	12	13	2014
Gothic Avenue Tour (Adult)	11	12	2005
Gothic Avenue Tour (Youth 6-12)	8	9	2005
Domes and Dripstones (Adult)	14	15	2014
Domes and Dripstones (Youth 6-12)	9	10	2014
Great Onyx Tour (Adult)	17	18	2014
Great Onyx Tour (Youth 6-12)	12	13	2014
Historic Tour (Adult)	12	14	2007
Historic Tour (Youth 6-12)	8	9	2005
Cleaveland Avenue (accessible) (Adult)	0	20	N/A
Cleaveland Avenue (accessible) (Youth 6-12)	0	14	N/A
River Styx Tour (Adult)	13	15	2007
River Styx Tour (Youth 6-12)	9	11	2007
Star Chamber Tour (Adult)	12	14	2007
Star Chamber Tour (Youth 6-12)	8	10	2007
Focus on Frozen Niagara-Photo Tour (Adult)	10	13	2007
Focus on Frozen Niagara (Youth 6-12)	8	9	2007
Trog (Child 8-12)	14	16	2007
Introduction to Caving (Adult)	25	26	2014
Introduction to Caving (Youth 6-12)	19	20	2014
Violet City Lantern Tour (Adult)	17	18	2014
Violet City Lantern Tour (Youth 6-12)	12	13	2014
Wild Cave Tour (Adult)	50	55	2014
Discovery Tour (Adult)	4	5	2001
Discovery Tour (Youth 6-12)	2.5	3.5	2001
Mammoth Cave Campground	17	20	2005

Mammoth Cave Group Campground	20	25	2005
Mammoth Cave VIP Campground	40	50	2005
Maple Springs Group/Equestrian (water/electric)	30	35	2007
Maple Springs Group/Equestrian (primitive)	22	25	2007
Open Picnic Shelter	25	50	2007
Enclosed Picnic Shelter	50	75	2007

Please note: It is the practice of the NPS to make all comments, including names and addresses of respondents who provide that information, available for public review. Individuals may request that the NPS withhold their name and/or address from public disclosure. Commentors must state this prominently at the beginning of their comment and check the box "keep my contact information private." NPS will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law, but may still be required to disclose a commentor's name and address pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. All submissions from organizations, businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

www.nps.gov/maca

About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 395 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.